IRON MAN

MARVEL 5 LGY#630

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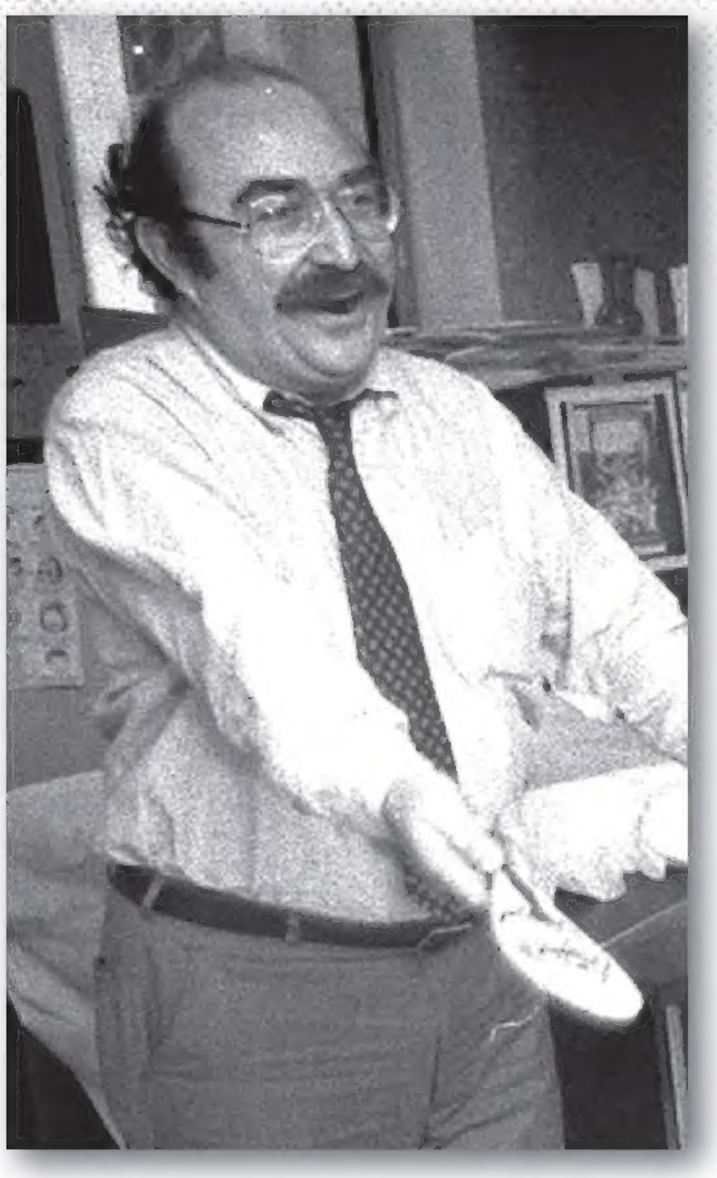

MIKE HOBSON
1936–2020

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Last month, longtime Marvel Comics Publisher Mike Hobson passed away. In remembrance of his life and work, Mike's friend and colleague Tom DeFalco, former Marvel Editor in Chief, shared his memories of the Marvel luminary.

Many are the unsung heroes of the comic book industry. These people are the hidden giants who work behind the scenes — without credit, fanfare or fame — but are essential to the creation of your comics. They are people like Mike Hobson.

As a supervisor at Marvel, Mike was the greatest. He encouraged initiative, listened with an open mind and always supported his people. He rarely raised his voice and had a near-magical way of defusing tense situations. (Mixing creative people with those from marketing, sales or accounting is usually a recipe for disaster.)

Mike defined the word "gentleman." He was refined and soft-spoken, had an infectious laugh and was an intriguing conversationalist, well-versed in a variety of subjects. He knew the best restaurants, the tastiest dishes, the most flavorsome wines and the finest hotels. An invitation to dine with Mike was always a treasured event. He was the adult we all wanted to be when we grew up.

Whenever I think of Mike, two occasions spring to mind. One is the very first time Marvel sent me on a business trip by myself. Mike asked to see me before I left. I went to his office with pen and pad, expecting some last-minute business instructions. Instead, he told me to make sure I made lunch and dinner reservations and gave me a list of restaurants.

I also recall sitting in my office one afternoon when a furious Mike burst in.

"Do you know what those two idiots are doing?" He asked.

"Which two idiots?" I responded.

Mike glared at me for a moment and then suddenly exploded in unrestrained laughter. He actually fell into my couch, and it took him several minutes to regain control. It seems two of my editors had stuck a fishing pole out our seventh-floor window with an old Milky Way for bait and were trolling for passersby. While Mike could appreciate the humor in the situation, he felt our editors needed to adhere to a higher standard of professionalism. That was Mike.

Mike Hobson was my boss and my friend. He will be missed.

Tom DeFalco
November 2020

Tony Stark is getting back to basics. He's resigned from the board of Stark Unlimited and is taking a hands-on approach to doing good in the world, outfitted in a new streamlined version of the Iron Man armor.

Iron Man and Hellcat were ambushed by Korvac, who was recently resurrected in an android body and seeks to boost his already formidable powers to godlike levels. The attack left Hellcat badly injured and vulnerable to Korvac's influence. Korvac also revealed that he's holding James Rhodes hostage and will kill him if Tony raises the alarm. Forced to improvise, Iron Man and Hellcat began forming a team of fringe heroes to oppose Korvac's latest plan to travel to *Taa II*--Galactus' worldship!

BRAVEST OF THE ARGIVES

IRON MAN

WRITER • CHRISTOPHER CANTWELL ARTIST • CAFU
COLOR ARTIST • FRANK D'ARMATA LETTERER • VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA
IRON MAN ARMOR DESIGN • ALEX ROSS

COVER • ALEX ROSS
VARIANT COVERS • ACO; JUNGGEUN YOON; FRANK CHO & SABINE RICH
DESIGNER • CARLOS LAO
ASSISTANT EDITOR • MARTIN BIRO ASSOCIATE EDITOR • ALANNA SMITH
EDITOR • TOM BREVOORT EDITOR IN CHIEF • C.B. CEBULSKI

IRON MAN CREATED BY STAN LEE, LARRY LIEBER, DON HECK & JACK KIRBY

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PATSY, CAN YOU HEAR HIM? CAN YOU HEAR *KORVAC?*

...NO... NOT RIGHT NOW...

THANK GOODNESS FOR A CAT'S NINE LIVES.

I THINK I'M DOWN TO ABOUT FIVE OR SIX... GEEZ LOUISE, YOUR ARMOR'S STARTING TO LOOK LIKE A *BAD TRADE-IN...*

REST UP. WE'RE GONNA NEED YOU. BUT FOR NOW...

...I'M GOING TO SPEAK TO THE OTHERS IN PRIVATE.

OKAY, SORRY THERE'S NO COFFEE OR DONUTS, BUT I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THE USUAL PLEASANTRIES.

AND--FULL TRANSPARENCY-- YOU'RE ALL I COULD FIND ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE.

GARGOYLE.
FORMER DEFENDER. CURRENT GIG: OWNER OF ISAAC'S OYSTERS IN THE VILLAGE.

THE SCARLET SPIDER.
SPIDER-MAN'S XEROX COPY. CURRENT GIG: OCCASIONAL NIGHT SHIFT SECURITY FOR THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART.

MISTY KNIGHT.
WHOSE SIDE IS SHE CURRENTLY ON? THIS ONE...FOR NOW. CURRENT GIG: KNIGHTWING RESTORATIONS LTD. DETECTIVE AGENCY.

I WASN'T EXACTLY BUSY.

I MEAN, I WAS BUSY... NO, NOT REALLY. I WASN'T BUSY.

IS HELLCAT OKAY? AND BY THE WAY, STARK, I'M CHARGING BY THE HOUR FOR THIS.

THIS IS THE BEST DAY OF MY LIFE.

FROG MAN.
ZERO SOLO TITLES, ACTION FIGURES, TRADING CARDS OR REAL ABILITIES. CURRENT GIG: BUSBOY AT ISAAC'S OYSTERS IN THE VILLAGE.

HELLCAT'S FINE... LISTEN, I HAD HALCYON HERE TRACK YOU DOWN BECAUSE I HAVE TO KEEP A TIGHT LID ON THIS OR JAMES RHODES COULD GET KILLED.

SO *THAT'S* WHY THE AVENGERS AREN'T STANDING HERE.

LET ME CATCH YOU UP.

...DEHYDRATED?

THERE'S JUST A LOT TO GET THROUGH.

AHEM DID YOU GUYS ALL LOOK UP KORVAC ON THE INTERNET BEFORE YOU CAME HERE? GOOD.

LONG STORY SHORT: HE'S BACK. YOU MIGHT REMEMBER HIM FROM SOME OF HIS GREATEST HITS, LIKE *"KILLING EVERY AVENGER"* AND *"HAVING THE ABILITY TO ERADICATE ALL OF EXISTENCE."*

BUT THAT WAS WHEN HE WAS A FULL-ON COSMIC ENTITY. RIGHT NOW, HE'S JUST AN ANDROID... WELL...HE'S AN ANDROID THAT HAS SUPERCHARGED HIMSELF WITH ABOUT *48 PETAWATTS* OF ENERGY.

FOR REFERENCE, THE EARTH ABSORBS AROUND 120 PETAWATTS FROM THE SUN AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT.

NICE, SOME GOOD NEWS. HE'S NOT AS POWERFUL AS *THE SUN.*

MY BEST GUESS IS HE MADE HIMSELF THAT POWERFUL IN ORDER TO STORM *TAA II*, GALACTUS' WORLDSHIP, AND POSSIBLY TO TAKE ON GALACTUS HIMSELF IF HE HAS TO.

CAN I, *UH*, GET SOME OF THAT WATER?

MY HUNCH IS HE WANTS THE POWER COSMIC. THE LAST TIME HE GOT IT ON TAA II, HE ESSENTIALLY BECAME GOD, AND WE COULDN'T STOP HIM.

YOU ALREADY MET HALCYON. HE'S NEW, BUT HE KNOWS ANY ENGINE INSIDE AND OUT.

CHCK-GSN

HE'S LITERALLY UNFLINCHING BECAUSE HE'S GOT A MUTANT HEART RATE LOCKED AT 70 BPM. THIS SUIT STIMULATES HIS ADRENAL SYSTEM SO HE'S NOT INSTANTLY KILLED WHILE HANGING OUT WITH US.

QUESTIONS?

YEAH, I HAVE ONE.
GO AHEAD.
HOW DO WE STAND A CHANCE?
THIS GROUP? I HAVE NO IDEA.
MY BEST ANSWER IS: YOU HAVE ME. SO MY ADVICE IS: DO AS I SAY. THEN AND ONLY THEN CAN WE HOPE TO STOP KORVAC.
LOOK, I'LL DO THIS FOR RHODES, STARK. AND, YOU KNOW...THE UNIVERSE. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE NOT STILL AN--
YEAH, I DON'T REALLY HAVE TIME FOR YOUR OPINIONS OF ME. I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THOSE FROM EVERYONE.
I NEED YOU ALL TO GET TO WORK RIGHT NOW.

OVERSTOCK WAREHOUSE, THE BRONX.

LORD KORVAC, GUARDSMAN IS IN POSITION AND WE'VE LOCKED IN THE COORDINATES.

THANK YOU, UNICORN.

ACOLYTES...

...THIS SHIP WILL TAKE US TO THE DOORSTEP OF *HEAVEN ITSELF.*

YOU GOT RID OF THE GOATEE. GOOD CALL.

KYFFFF

CAN'T TELL IF YOU'RE MORE FOCUSED ON THE *SAVED* OR THE *SAVIOR*...

WE NEED TO LEAVE BEFORE *TAA II* MOVES FROM THE GOSS SECTOR.

WE CAN'T PULL STARK OUT INTO SPACE AFTER US. HE HAS TO BE SACRIFICED HERE, ON THIS PLANET.

THE VESSEL HAS BEEN PLACED AND ACTIVATED.

GOOD. CONTROLLER, CONTINUE TO PREPARE FOR OUR DEPARTURE.

ALL I NEED IS AN HOUR.

...PATSY...
...PATSY...

NO... I WON'T TELL YOU ANYTHING... *I WON'T...*

...SAVE RHODES... SAVE TONY... LET ME SAVE YOU ALL...

YEARS AGO.

AND YOU'VE ASSISTED IN THIS PROCEDURE BEFORE?

YES, SEVERAL TIMES. YOU THINK IT'LL BE EFFECTIVE?

ELECTRO-CONVULSIVE THERAPY IS USUALLY A LAST RESORT FOR ME, BUT WE'VE GOT TO TAMP DOWN THE VOICES SHE'S HEARING.

"WITH A ***CLEARER MIND,*** SHE'LL HAVE A MUCH BETTER CHANCE AT RECOVERY."

KEEP GOING. FOLLOW ME. BRING STARK WITH YOU.

YOU JUST WANT US ***DEAD,*** KORVAC.

NO, PATSY. I FEEL HOW YOU'VE SUFFERED. HOW YOU'RE STILL TORMENTED. WHEN I MAKE ALL THINGS ONE...YOUR TORMENT WILL VANISH FOREVER.

...RAIN... HOW DID I...

I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU AGAIN.

YOU THINK I HAVEN'T DEALT WITH VOICES INSIDE MY HEAD BEFORE, KORVAC?

YOU KNOW MY LIGHT. I WILL FREE THE WORLD.

MAYBE.

MAYBE #@%& YOURSELF.

PCHHZZZZZZZZ

NNNNAAAAHNNN...

IGNORANCE. SUCH *FEARFUL* IGNORANCE.

SUFFER, THEN. FEEL *EVERY BIT* OF YOUR FEAR.

I'VE BEEN PLAYING IT AS A GIVEN THAT I SHOULD STOP HIM.

NO MATTER HOW CONVINCED KORVAC IS THAT HE SHOULD *"PERFECT"* THE UNIVERSE, HE HAS TO BE OUT OF HIS MIND. HE HAS TO BE WRONG.

...DOESN'T HE?

HIS INTELLECT HAS NEVER BEEN QUANTIFIED.

I HAVE TO ADMIT, A SMALL PART OF ME...

...WONDERS IF HE REALLY DOES KNOW BETTER.

I CAN'T COUNT HOW MANY IDEAS I'VE HAD ABOUT HOW TO SAVE THE WORLD. HOW ***SURE*** I'VE BEEN.

AND HOW I'VE BEEN ***WRONG*** BASICALLY EVERY TIME...

SOMETHING FOLKS ***LOVE*** POINTING OUT TO ME THESE DAYS.

A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE THOUGHT THEY WERE GOD OVER THE SPAN OF HISTORY.

IS IT POSSIBLE ONE OF THEM--SOMEDAY--COULD BE ***RIGHT?***

YOU GOT SOMETHING?

RESOURCE IN THE BRONX SAYS THERE ARE *MASSIVE RADIATION SIGNATURES* COMING OFF A WAREHOUSE IN PORT MORRIS.

WHAT'S INSIDE?

ACCORDING TO THE SHIPPING WEBSITE, OVERFLOW INVENTORY FOR HEARTH & HOME FURNISHINGS.

DOES SOMEBODY HAVE THIS? I DON'T KNOW ASL.

I...

HE SAYS "*POWER OUTPUT LIKE THAT HAS TO BE FROM A COMBUSTION ENGINE.*"

HE SAYS... "A GIANT ENGINE."

SO UNLESS HEARTH & HOME HAS A *BIG-ASS PROPULSION SYSTEM* IN ITS SPRING CATALOGUE--

GUYS, HELLCAT'S GONE.

WHERE ON EARTH IS STARK?

THERE YOU ARE, PATSY...

...LED ME RIGHT TO HIM.

YOU OKAY?

...NNNNNNH...

I'M SORRY... I USED YOU AS BAIT. I KNEW YOU'D STILL BE SUSCEPTIBLE TO HIM. I KNEW HE'D DRAW YOU OUT--

FIRE, FIRE... I SEE THE *FIRE*. THE FIRE IS HERE--

PATSY?

DON'T LET THE FIRE TOUCH ME. PLEASE, *I DON'T WANT TO BE IN THE FIRE*--

WHAT DID HE DO TO YOU?!

DAIMON*...? THIS IS... *HELL*...I DON'T...I DON'T WANT TO *BE* HERE...*HELP ME*... *OH GOD*...

*PATSY WAS ONCE MARRIED TO DAIMON HELLSTROM, THE SON OF SATAN. IT DIDN'T GO WELL. --TOM

PATSY, NO, YOU'RE HERE, THAT'S OVER NOW. IT'S ME, TONY--

FIRE, FIRE... TEETH AND FIRE, FIRE AND TEETH...

I'M DEAD... MY SOUL IS DEAD...I AM... I AM...

PATSY, LISTEN TO ME... I'M SORRY, I SHOULDN'T HAVE LET HIM NEAR YOU... PATSY...YOU'RE GONNA BE ALL RIGHT...

STARK, IT'S MISTY. WE'RE CLOSING IN ON A POSSIBLE OFF-PLANET ENGINE IN PORT MORRIS.

WAIT FOR ME TO MAKE YOUR MOVE. AND MISTY, BE CAREFUL...

WHO KNOWS BEST?

IS IT ME?

THERE'S A MAN WITH A BOMB INSIDE!

PATSY, I HAVE TO GO...

NO! DON'T GO, DON'T LEAVE ME! FIRE AND TEETH...

I WILL BE RIGHT BACK. I PROMISE.

WHO KNOWS BEST?

...DON'T LEAVE ME TO THEM...

THERE YOU ARE.

THE *HERO.*

MAKE SURE YOU SEPARATE YOUR WHITES. YOU DON'T WANT YOUR COLORS TO BLEED.

"BLEED." YES. SPEAKING OF WHICH, YOU LOOK LIKE YOU COULD USE A CHANGE OF CLOTHES YOURSELF.

NO BOMB, THEN.

OF COURSE NOT. I DON'T WANT ANYONE TO GET *HURT.*

YOU WANT TO TAKE OVER THE UNIVERSE, YEAH? WITH THE BEST OF INTENTIONS. WELL, LET ME TELL YOU WHAT GOOD INTENTIONS GET YOU: NOTHING. ZERO.

OH YE OF LITTLE FAITH.

YOU THINK YOU CAN SOMEHOW SAVE EVERY SINGLE THING.

BUT YOU DON'T THINK I CAN PULL IT OFF.

NO.

HM.

IS THERE A BETTER CANDIDATE? YOU, PERHAPS?

NO ONE WOULD TRUST ME FARTHER THAN THEY COULD THROW ME. INCLUDING ME.

BUT... IF SOMEONE HAD TO CALL ALL THE SHOTS...I'D MUCH RATHER IT BE SOMEONE WHO KNOWS WHAT'S RIGHT--

STARK. WE'RE HERE.

WE'VE FOUND THE SHIP. IT'S A SHI'AR JUMPCRAFT.

DISABLE IT.

HONESTLY... I THINK YOU JUST WANT TO BE IN *MY* SHOES. I THINK *YOU* WANT TO MAKE THE PROCLAMATIONS. I THINK YOU'RE TIRED OF BEING TOLD YOU'RE WRONG.

HOLD ON... TONY...THERE'S NOTHING HERE.

WHAT?

THE SHIP-- IT'S A SHELL. EVEN THOUGH THE STAR DRIVE IS POWERED UP...

THE LIGHTS ARE ON, BUT NOBODY'S HOME.

COME ON, TONY, YOU'RE SMART ENOUGH TO HAVE STUDIED *THE ODYSSEY*, AREN'T YOU?

MISTY--GET OUT OF THERE-- NOW! GET OUT OF THERE--

KA-KRAKOOOOWWW

MISTY?! ANYBODY?! DO YOU READ ME???

YOU'RE MISGUIDED, STARK. YOU LIKE TO THINK YOU SHOULD BE IN CHARGE, BUT THE TRUTH IS...YOU'RE JUST AN *UPRIGHT WORM.*

...NO... NO, NO, NO, NO...

YOU'D BETTER LEAVE MATTERS THAT YOU'RE NOT SUITED FOR IN *MORE CAPABLE* HANDS.

OZZZZZRRRP

GYYYEEEDAAAAAAA--

WAS THAT IT? WAS THAT EVERYTHING?

<AUX POWER: FAILURE.> <EMERGENCY MODE: FAILURE.>

YOUR SUIT IS COMPLETELY SPENT, ISN'T IT? YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE YOUR MOBILITY SYSTEMS.

KA-LANCK

...PATSY...

WE'LL LEAVE IN TEN MINUTES. TELL GUARDSMAN THAT THE FALSE SHIP WAS A GREAT SUCCESS AND THAT HE'LL BE REWARDED IN PARADISE.

CRRKK

<CERVICAL. FRACTURE.> <C2: AXIS. C3.> <CRITICAL. LIGATURE-- COMPRESSION.>

I'M SORRY, TONY STARK.

<DANGER: HYPOXIA.>

<HYPOXIA.>

<HYPOXIA.>

BUT I PROMISE YOU, IT WILL ALL BE *SO* BEAUTIFUL.

TO BE CONTINUED!

NEXT

WITH HELLCAT ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ROPES AND THE STATUS OF HIS OTHER HERO COMPATRIOTS UNKNOWN, CAN TONY MUSTER WHAT HE NEEDS IN ORDER TO CHASE KORVAC OUT INTO SPACE AND STOP THE MAD DEMIGOD'S QUEST FOR ULTIMATE POWER?

ZONE